



(U) InSIDer's View of History: Resourceful NCOs at Goodfellow

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(U) Here's a story to commemorate Armed Forces Week:

(U) In 1987, I was assigned to Goodfellow AFB, San Angelo, Texas. Then, as now, Chinese and Korean linguists were in high demand. Due to the mission rigors in Korea, people in these career fields were rotated back to Korea approximately every 12 - 14 months (much like it is now). Within the Air Force assignment system, once you complete a short tour you are assigned back to the United States, so many Chinese and Korean linguists found themselves assigned to Goodfellow AFB to assist in "curriculum development."

(U) Curriculum development -- i.e. support to intelligence training -- encompassed everything from vault monitors and secure area management (weeds & seeds/burn/mulch operator) to building managers. As a Secure Area Manager, I recall many occasions of being covered in a white powdery substance while trying to "unclog" the two-story mulching machine. Needless to say, it wasn't what I had envisioned as a young Chinese Linguist but it gave me an incredible appreciation of the resourcefulness of the fellow NCOs (Non-commissioned Officers) I worked with.

(U) A classic example was the impending visit of General Lawrence Oaks, the Air Force Commander of the Air Education Training Commander (AETC). This was General Oaks' first visit to Goodfellow AFB, so the base commander wanted to make a good impression. General Oaks liked the color brown, so everything was painted brown, the rocks along the main gate, the building walls, even the mail boxes (much to the postmaster's dismay). On a side note: we also painted the brown grass green.

(U) Finally, the big day arrived. The commanders from the entire base gathered in front of the Entry Control Point to escort the General through the secure area. Col James O'Brien, Wing Commander, noticed the doormat leading into Building 519 was "not suitable for a General." Immediately, Secure Area Managers Sgt Terry Wilson and Sgt Bob Raley (both Chinese Linguists) sprang into action. Placing airmen at strategic points along the general's route to provide situational awareness, the two NCOs grabbed the brand-new doormat from the Wing Commander's entrance, moved it to the main entrance and continued to move the mat throughout the General's visit, based on the intelligence gleaned from the forward-deployed airmen.

(U) Having been deployed to Saudi Arabia for Desert Calm/Operation Southern Watch, and in a variety of operational situations, I do not think I have seen a better use of intelligence. The information was timely, accurate, and actionable. The integration of SIGINT, HUMINT, and IMINT would make an Air



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Operations Commander's eyes water. Needless to say, the General's visit was a great success and I gained an incredible lesson in the resourcefulness NCOs.

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